NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property								
historic name other names/site numbe		Smith, J.	Warren,	House				
2. Location								
street & number 21 N	rtv							or publication
state South Carolina	_ code	SC_cou	nty Pi	ckens	code	077	zip code	29657
3. State/Federal Agenc	v Certifi	cation						
Signature of certifying office Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy State or Federal agency and bur In my opinion, the property m Signature of commenting of	State His eau eetsdoe or other of	storic Prese s not meet the ficial C	rvation Of	ficer, S.C.				
State or Federal agency a		YOU COLUMN T						
I, hereby certify that this property entered in the National Regis See continuation sheet.	is:	ication	Signature	of the Keeps	,	. Dat	e of Action	-

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Smith, J. Warren, House Name of Property			¥9	County and State				
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7. Descript	tion							
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			roof	Shine	gle			

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

other

Smith, J. Warren, House	Pickens County, South Carolina
Name of Property	County and State
8. Statement of Significance	
X B Property is associated with the lives of po X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics.	eve made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. Persons significant in our past. Iteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the world alues, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose
Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.) _ a owned by a religious institution or used for the property of the property of the property. _ c a birthplace or a grave. _ d a cemetery. _ e a reconstructed building, object, or struct. _ f a commemorative property. _ g less than 50 years of age or achieved signal.	re.
Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions) Architecture	Period of Significance 1927-1954
	Significant Dates 1927
Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) Smith, J. Warren	Cultural Affiliation N/A
	Architect/Builder Unknown
Narrative Statement of Significance Explain the significance of the property on one	or more continuation sheets.)
9. Major Bibliographical References	
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in prepare	ng this form on one or more continuation sheets.)
Previous documentation on file (NPS): _ preliminary determination of individual listing requested. _ previously listed in the National Register _ previously determined eligible by the National designated a National Historic Landmark _ recorded by Historic American Buildings Sur _ recorded by Historic American Engineering Recorded by Historic American Engineering Recorded Buildings Sur	Other State agencyFederal agency Local governmentUniversity vey # X Other

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Smith, J. Warren, Ho	OUSE		Pickens County, Sou	th Carolina
Name of Property			County and State	
0. Geographical	Data			
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JTM References Place additional UTM ref	ferences on a continuation sheet)			
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See continuation s	sheet.			
Verbal Boundary De Boundary Justification	escription (Describe the boundaries of the On (Explain why the boundaries were sele-	e property on a continua cted on a continuation s	tion sheet.) heet.)	
11. Form Prepare	ed By			
name/title	Robert Benedict, Principal			
	Palmetto Preservation Works,	LLC	date	
stroot & number	101 College Street, Suite 2B			(864) 270-4406 tip code 29601
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.0. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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The J. Warren Smith House is located at 21 North Palmetto Street, at the corner of North Palmetto Street and Edgemont Avenue in Liberty, Pickens County, South Carolina. Built in 1927, it is a two-and-one-half story brick veneer residence situated prominently on approximately one acre, one block north of Liberty's central business district.

The J. Warren Smith House has 4080 square feet with a solid, brick foundation. The wall construction is frame brick veneer laid in running courses. Massing is symmetrical, with a prominent portico entrance at the center of the front façade. The one-story entry porch features Doric columns clustered at the corners and paired and engaged where it meets the house. A flat roof with a low balustrade covers the porticos. In the style of earlier Greek Revival homes, the front entry is accentuated by large rectangular sidelights and a matching transom.

The portico design is repeated in one-story porches on both sides of the house. The porch on the north elevation (fronting Edgemont Street) was used by the Smiths as the family entrance. The porch on the southern end of the house may have been screened at one time, but was enclosed in 1970 when the house was updated. The porch ceilings feature bead board. A small deck on the rear of the house was also enclosed with vinyl siding, likely at the same time as the southern porch.

Windows along the main façade are of the double-hung sash variety (mostly six over six), grouped in banks of three on the first floor and paired on the second. On all but the rear façade, a centered, low-pitch hipped dormer in the attic space accommodates two smaller double hung sash windows. Composite shingles form a low-pitch, hipped roof with a balustrade along the top. Some reports suggest the rooftop was used as a sundeck, but family and owner accounts suggest otherwise. Widely overhanging eaves with new vinyl soffits and built-in gutters reflect subtle Prairie style influences.

The J. Warren Smith House features a massed plan with rooms arranged asymmetrically around a side hall. The house has two formal entrances: the main entrance at the front of the house and an identical entrance on the north side of the house that was used primarily by family members.

Living Room. The centrally located main entrance opens directly into a large living room. Like most of the rooms in the J. Warren Smith House, the living room benefits from a wealth of natural light from a variety of sources, namely the transom and sidelights from the front door and the large bank of double-hung windows on the east elevation. Another door with sidelights and a transom opens to the side porch and adds to the airiness of the room. Wood trim in the living room is repeated throughout the house. All of the doors and windows have dark-stained oak trim. Dark oak baseboards, 10" in height, are also featured in the living room and throughout the house. Modern carpet covers the 2 1/4" hardwood floors that are exposed in other rooms. The living room has two sets of French doors, each door containing fifteen lights. All doors retain their original hardware. To the left, the doors open into a formal dining room. The other set of French doors provides access to the central hall. One of the most interesting architectural features of the living room is the faux fireplace. The fireplace is made of brick arranged in decorative diamond and linear patterns and is topped with a marble mantle. Interestingly, the fireplace was constructed as a non-functioning architectural detail. Indeed, the depth of the wall does not accommodate a chimney. Other features of note are the original electric overhead light, sprinkler heads and connections for the internal vacuum system (discussed below). Perhaps the most significant, though, are two connections for the internal radio antenna. One of the most distinctive and significant features of the house, the internal antenna accommodated the Smith's upright Philco model radio.

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George W. Smith, MD, interview by David Arning, January 5, 2004, Easley, SC.

Anne Kelley Brown, interview by Robert Benedict, January 17, 2004, Liberty, SC.

OMB No. 1024-0018

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Center Hall. The center hall is accessible from the living room via French doors as mentioned above. The side entry, also known as the "informal entry," was used only by the family. It also leads into the center hall, which includes stairways to the basement and upper stories as well as numerous doors leading into virtually every room on the first floor. Because of its many doors and the distinctive trim carpentry, the hallway is defined by the craftsmanship and beauty of stained oak woodwork. Most notably, a linear staircase rises from the side entry to the center of the second story. Dark oak, it features a formal newel, balustrade and handrail. Downstairs, large two-paneled doors lead to the master bedroom, breakfast room, rear hall and basement stair well. The center hall also has two distinctive overhead lights. The decorative electric lights resemble candles and are original to the house. One of the more curious elements in the center hall is a historic full-length mirror along the wall. The mirror is framed in matching oak trim and is unique both for its style and its attached hardware, which permits it to serve a dual purpose as a coat and hat rack. Both the mirror glass and hardware are original.

<u>Dining Room.</u> Through the French doors left of the main entrance is the formal dining room. Like the living room, this space is also well lit by large windows as well as two individual doors (15 lights each) with transoms (5 lights) that lead to the former sun porch on the south side of the house. Ceilings are 10' in the dining room and throughout the first floor. A five-light electric chandelier, similar to the living room chandelier, hangs in the center of the dining room.

South Porch. The south porch was modified in 1970 when it was fully enclosed with wood siding material. The grandson of Warren Smith remembers the porch being screened in. The enclosure of this porch was to accommodate additional boarders with its conversion to a bedroom. Currently, this space serves as a laundry room.

Breakfast Room. An original two-paneled, swinging door leads from the dining room into the breakfast room. Smaller than the formal dining room, this space is no less architecturally significant. Sunlight pours in from a window bank on the south wall and reflects off a large, built-in buffet with glassed cabinets. The buffet is the focal point of this room with its distinctive detailing and hardware. The breakfast room was where meals were served to tenants and diners. Several boarding and luncheon guests recall the buffet table while discussing the Myrtle Inn. A small picture rail, found in other rooms on both floors, runs along the wall approximately 1' below the ceiling.

<u>Kitchen</u>. From the breakfast room, a doorway leads to the kitchen, at the southwestern corner of the house. The kitchen is illuminated by three six-over-six double-hung, sash windows. In this room, the windows and trim are painted rather than stained. Where there are no windows, the kitchen walls are covered with the original, built-in wooden cabinets. The cabinets were updated at an undetermined date with new doors and lamination and the countertop was replaced. Crown molding adorns the kitchen ceiling. Linoleum covers what are likely the original hardwood floors. A 15-light door provides access to the rear porch. An external chimney rises from the rear of the house off the kitchen, but there is no evidence of a fireplace inside.

Rear Hall. Continuing clockwise along the rear of the house, a third doorway off the kitchen leads into a rear central hall. In this room, there is evidence along the ceiling that a wall was removed or altered at some time. It is also curious that two sprinkler heads were placed in this relatively small space. One possibility, suggested by the extra sprinkler head and ghost wall on the ceiling, is that the door from the kitchen actually led to a small, enclosed pantry. In its current configuration, however, the hall is simply an open, rectangular space with crown molding. Another 15-light door and a small four-over-four window on the rear wall look out over the back porch. The rear hall includes a small coat closet and a door that leads to a shared master bathroom.

⁴ Ibid.

⁶ Brown.

⁶ Smith.

⁷ Louisa J. Fleming, interview by Robert Benedict, August 9, 2003, Liberty, SC.

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Master Bathroom. The master bathroom is situated between the rear hall and the master bedroom, which is at the northwest corner of the house. The bathroom is small but features the original toilet, sink and encased cast-iron tub. The bath fixtures have been replaced, though some of the originals remain in the upstairs bathrooms. A large wooden panel in the master bathroom provides easy access to the bathroom tub plumbing. The floor is made of original octagonal tiles. There is also a built-in medicine cabinet and mirror above the sink. A six-over-six window with frosted glass lets light into the master bath.

Master Bedroom. Exiting through the bath's other door leads into the master bedroom. The main access to the bedroom is from the central side hall. Though not the largest bedroom in the house, this served as the master bedroom for the Smiths and later occupants. Dr. George Smith recalls that the layout of the house allowed his grandmother to move easily between the kitchen, bathroom and bedroom when hosting guests.

Second Floor. Upstairs, a central hallway with several doors accesses six bedrooms and two bathrooms. Ceilings are 9' in height on the second floor. The bedrooms are all large and feature the same dark-stained oak trim (10" baseboards, picture rail, windows and doors). The bright and airy character of the house is continued in these bedrooms, as they each feature six-over-six double hung sash windows. Bathrooms are small and simple, similar to the master bath. Only one bathroom is original and retains its historic porcelain tub fixtures. The second bath was converted from a closed. Other built-in closets remain in some of the bedrooms.

Attic. Stairs ascend from the second floor up to an unfinished attic. Reportedly, the attic was originally intended to house additional bedrooms and a bathroom. The steep roofline and large dormers would have afforded plenty of room and natural light for additional living space. Further, the attic was originally plumbed with water lines stubbed out for the proposed bathroom and sprinkler heads for fire protection. The attic was never finished, however, and is currently used for storage. A steep set of stairs leads to a hatch that provides access to the rooftop. Though it has been reported the roof served as a sundeck, the difficulty in accessing the roof suggests otherwise.

Basement. The basement is only accessible from the center hall on the main floor. The front portion of the basement is crawlspace only. In the rear, however, a fully excavated basement housed the home's utilities. Two fairly large spaces currently offer storage. Warren Smith's grandson remembers his uncle using one of the spaces as his workshop. Underneath the kitchen is a utility room that houses an original industrial sink, the central vacuum system and the coal-burning furnace. Both the heating and vacuum systems were innovative for their day. The coal burning furnace powered a steam heat system. Free-standing radiators heated the upstairs rooms. The central vacuum system included hook-ups in each room where the hose could be easily installed. In the basement utility room, a conveyor belt re-supplied coal to the furnace, thus eliminating the need for someone to continually reload it. In 1970, alterations were made to the basement with the addition of a bedroom and a dropped, acoustical-tile ceiling.

Landscape. The J. Warren Smith House is centrally located on a level, square-shaped lot. The house is oriented to the east with the main façade on Palmetto Street. Brick piers with cast iron street lamps, centrally located at the sidewalks on Palmetto and Edgemont, accentuate paths to the front and side entrances. The piers often have been mistaken as part of a perimeter fence, but no such wall or fencing ever existed. The entrance paths are original, but secondary walks which extended from the front walk around the sides of the house have been removed. Originally these paths were lined with

⁹ Smith.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² D.

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boxwoods, but they too have been removed. Several mature magnolias and a large cottonwood tree that the Smith grandchildren once played in remain on the property. 13

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The J. Warren Smith House is significant as an excellent example of an early twentieth century Colonial Revival residence and for its association with J. Warren Smith, prominent business executive and owner of Liberty Light and Power Company, the first supplier of local electricity. The house features many of the architectural characteristics typical of the Colonial Revival style, including a symmetrical façade, prominent classical entrance and balanced window pairs. Its grand scale and quality craftsmanship convey the image of affluence and prominence befitting a man of J. Warren Smith's import. It is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria B and C.

J. Warren Smith, born in Anderson on December 31, 1880, attended Anderson County public schools. His diverse professional career began in farming, but soon led to a six-year occupation as a successful and skilled carpenter. He subsequently worked as a salesman and gas engine expert for International Harvester. Finally, in 1910, J. Warren Smith founded the Liberty Light & Power Company, bringing electricity to Liberty for the first time. Smith used two gasoline powered motors to generate electricity for one hundred fifty customers and the streets of Liberty.

Smith continued to manage and own the Liberty Light & Power until the late 1920s, when public demand for electricity exceeded the company's ability to supply it. Consequently, around 1927 he sold his company to Duke Power Company with an agreement that guaranteed his employment for life. Smith then served as the Pickens County manager at the company's Liberty branch. He held that post until 1937, when he was transferred to the Greenville office. Smith remained a prominent citizen in Liberty, actively participating in several civic and political organizations as well as the Liberty Methodist Episcopal Church.

In 1941 Smith sold his home in Liberty and moved his family to Greenville. He continued his employment with Duke Power at the Rural Electrification and Engineering Department in Greenville until 1955, when he retired. In 1966 Smith settled at the Pecan Terrace Hotel in nearby Easley. He died June 6, 1968, and was buried with his family in Liberty.

Around 1927, at the height of his commercial and financial success, Smith determined to build a grand mansion for his family. The Smith family consisted of Smith, his wife Mattie, and their six children. Though most of his children were grown and lived on their own by 1927, Smith wanted a fine home to reflect his entrepreneurial and social prominence within the Liberty community. Sources disagree over the exact date of construction, some suggesting that the house was built after and as a result of the sale of the company to Duke Power in 1927. One oral history indicates that the house was completed over the course of four years, perhaps explaining some of the confusion.

Pickens County, South Carolina Cemetery Survey: Volume Two. Pendleton Chapter of South Carolina Genealogical Society, p. 214.

The History of South Carolina: Biographical Volume. New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1934, p. 142.
 Woodson, Julia Jean and G. Anne Sheriff. Liberty South Carolina: One Hundred Years, 1876-1976. Central, South Carolina: Faith Clayton Family Research Center, Central Wesleyan College, 1992, p. 90.

Ibid., 91.
 The History of South Carolina, p. 142; Woodson, p. 91; George W. Smith, M.D. interview by David Arning, January 5, 2004, Easley, S.C.; Mary E. Crowthers, written history, September 14, 2003, Liberty, S.C.

The History of South Carolina, p. 142.

Woodson, p. 91.

⁸ The History of South Carolina, p. 142.

⁹ The Pickens Sentinel (Pickens, S.C.), June 13, 1968.

¹⁰ The History of South Carolina, p. 142.

¹¹ A published history of Liberty says the house was built in 1925 in one place, and 1928 in another. Pickens County tax records list the date of construction as 1927.

² Julia Woodson, intensiew by Louise J. Fleming, July 20, 2003. Liberty, SC.

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Upon its completion in the late 1920s, the J. Warren Smith House quickly became a focal point of the community. Residents agree that the house was a showplace in its day and that, in particular, citizens of Liberty would ride by the house at dusk to admire its grandeur, including illuminated electrical streetlamps situated atop brick piers. To the Smith family, the house was a popular gathering place. Dr. George W. Smith, Smith's grandson, remembers the rich musical history of the house. J. Warren Smith required each of his children to learn an instrument. The instruments were stored and practiced in the "music room," located adjacent to the grand living room. The centerpiece of the "Smith family orchestra" was a grand rosewood piano, an especially fine piece even in its day. The Smith family reportedly played not only in their home, but also at nearby Rocky Bottom, a well-known summer resort for prominent locals.

The house was not only a showplace for family and friends; it was often open to the public as well. In the 1930s and early 1940s, the Smiths opened the doors of their home to boarding guests, often school teachers and other local residents. Grandma "Mattie" Smith did the cooking, drawing fresh vegetables from her backyard garden. Eggs were also plentiful since the Smiths maintained a small chicken house on the back of a detached garage to the side of the house. (The garage itself featured two car bays that housed two vintage 1920s automobiles: a Maxwell and Cadillac. The garage/outbuilding was razed at an undetermined date.) From the back porch, which was open at the time, Grandma Smith was also known to protect her chicken eggs from rats with her .32 caliber Smith & Wesson. 15

The Smith's boarding house became known as Maggie Manor, a derivation of Mattie. ¹⁶ Following the sale of the house in 1941 to L.J. and Sybil Kelley, the house became known as the Myrtle Inn. ¹⁷ The Kelleys continued the use of the house as a boarding house until 1970. ¹⁸ The 1957 copy of Hill's Pickens & Liberty City Directory, the oldest edition available, lists the Myrtle Inn as a tourist home.

In 1941, following the acquisition of the house by the Kelleys, Mrs. Sybil Kelley's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Chamblin, also moved into the house. School teachers continued to occupy most of the second floor bedrooms. One neighbor shared her recollection of Mrs. Kelley and the Myrtle Inn: "Mrs. Chamblin, better known as 'Granny Chamblin,' [was] the best cook in town. Granny started serving mid-day dinners to the boarders and lots of businessmen from down town – sometimes serving as many as 20-30 people. The food was delicious and plenty. Granny Chamblin never turned one away." Others too, like businessman James Bearden who often enjoyed his lunch at the Smith house, recall the fine food and grand architecture of the Myrtle Inn. 20

Over the years, the J. Warren Smith house continued to operate as a boarding house, serving school teachers and workers from the Oconee Nuclear plant. The Kelleys ceased operating the Myrtle Inn in 1970 after Granny Chamblin passed away. Her granddaughter explained that the Kelleys simply wanted "more freedom." Thereafter, the house was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Kelley until December of 1994, when it was conveyed to their daughter, Mrs. Anne K. Brown. Later that month, the property was sold to David B. and Louise J. Fleming. In 2003, the property was transferred fully to Ms. Louise J. Fleming, the current owner.

¹³ Crowthers; James Bearden, phone interview by David Arning, January 7, 2004.

¹⁴ Smith.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Anne Kelley Brown, phone interview by Robert Benedict, January 17, 2004.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Crowthers.

²⁰ Bearden.

²¹ Brown

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The unique engineering and technological advancements of the J. Warren Smith House reflect an era of progression in Pickens County and a time of great social and commercial success. Beyond its grand Colonial Revival architecture and fine interior craftsmanship, the J. Warren Smith House is also notable for its advanced engineering features such as its internal radio system, central vacuum system, and sprinkler and heating systems. Despite limited alterations in 1970, the Smith House still possesses architectural significance that reflects the prominence of its owners and its role in the evolution of Liberty during the twentieth century.

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REFERENCES

INTERVIEWS

James Bearden, Telephone Interview by David Arning, 7 January 2004

Anne Kelley Brown, Telephone Interview by Robert Benedict, 17 January 2004

Louisa J. Fleming, Interview by Robert Benedict, Liberty, S.C., 9 August 2003

George W. Smith, M.D., Interview by David Arning, Easley, S.C., 5 January 2004

Julia Woodson, Interview by Louisa J. Fleming, Liberty, S.C., 20 July 2003

PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

Crowthers, Mary E. Unpublished history of the J. Warren Smith House, 14 September 2003, Liberty, S.C.

The History of South Carolina: Biographical Volume. New York: The American Historical Society, 1934.

Pendleton Chapter of the South Carolina Genealogical Society. Pickens County, South Carolina Cemetery Survey: Volume Two.

Woodson, Julia Jean, and G. Anne Sheriff. Liberty, South Carolina: One Hundred Years, 1876-1976. Central, S.C.: Faith Clayton Family Research Center, Central Wesleyan College, 1992.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is shown as the black line marked "J. Warren Smith House" on the accompanying Pickens County Tax Map, drawn at a scale of 1" = 35'.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property is restricted to the historic house and the town lot on which it is located.

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Section number Photographs

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The following information is the same for each of the photographs:

Name of Property:

Smith, J. Warren, House

Location of Property:

21 North Palmetto Street, Liberty Pickens County, South Carolina

Location of Original Negatives:

S.C. Department of Archives and History

Name of Photographers:

Robert Benedict and David Arning

Date of Photographs:

August 2003, January 2004, and October 2004

- 1. Front (east elevation) of house.
- Front (east elevation) of house.
- 3. Side portico (north elevation).
- 4. Side (south elevation) and rear (west elevation) of house.
- Main entry/portico (east elevation).
- 6. Front door and portico details.
- 7. Living room with faux fireplace.
- 8. Dining room.



